

(Washington, D.C.) - Congressman Rob Wittman (R-VA), released the following statement on the Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act of 2008, H.R. 5351:

"Today I voted against the flawed Renewable Energy and Energy Conservation Tax Act of 2008, H.R. 5351. We need comprehensive energy reform and renewable sources of energy should be integrated in the blueprint. This is an issue I took action on as a member of the Virginia Legislature where I was proud to introduce and pass the Biofuels Production Fund and Grant Incentive Program which encouraged increased production of neat biofuels

I also believe that we should continue private and public investment in additional alternative energy sources such as wind, solar, hydro and nuclear power. All of these technologies offer economic, environmental and security benefits and should be pursued with vigor.

"H.R. 5351 though, as it was presented today included provisions that would actually hasten our nation's energy problems. Increasing the tax burden on energy companies will remove any incentive they would have for making new investments in cleaner and safer technology. Moreover, any additional costs associated with doing business will surely be passed on to the average American consumer, something we should not even consider while in an economic slowdown.

"Let me reiterate though that I strongly support the increased development, production, and use of renewable sources of energy. I am pleased to be a member of the Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Caucus. This caucus was formed to serve as a bi-partisan mechanism for discussing how we can introduce more clean energy legislation and move towards energy independence. I look forward to working with my

colleagues from both parties to offer the American people solutions

that do not punish any one segment of this debate and reward everyone willing to help move us in the right direction.

“Strong, sound energy policy is what is needed at this time, not punitive action by the federal government. Our reliance on foreign sources of oil has contributed to strained relations in a number of unstable regions of the world which is why it is crucial that we explore every option as we seek to achieve energy independence. That requires that every relevant party be allowed to participate in the discussion and be part of the solution, including companies involved in the mining and production of fossil fuels. We should be encouraging every willing partner to invest in the new technologies that will lower energy costs, ensure our safety and security and preserve the pristine beauty of this great nation for many future generations.”